

As disclosed in Edwards:

"The array shown in FIGS. 20 and 23 also includes **one input control line 126 and one signal output line 128 for each chip 106** (for 16 additional lines, comprising a total of 32 conducting lines). These lines 126 and 128 are connected, respectively, to the signal multiplexing control circuit 132 and to the signal processing circuit 134 of the controller 14." [col. 10, lines 1-6, emphasis added]

"In an alternative arrangement (as FIGS. 22 and 24 show)....The array carried by the tube 118 also includes **one input control line 126 and one signal output line 128 for each chip 106**, for a total of 16 additional lines. As before described, these line 126 and 128 are connected to the multiplexing and signal analyzing circuits 132 and 134 of the controller 14 (as FIG. 24 shows)." [col. 10, lines 16; 29-34, emphasis added]

As can be seen from the above figures, Edwards discloses separate conductors 126 (input) and 128 (output) for each processor (microprocessor chip 106). These separate input and output conductors carry the signals from the individual processors (microprocessor chips 106) to the "multiplexing and signal analyzing circuits 132 and 134 of the controller 14" which, as shown in Fig. 1. below, are contained within equipment located outside the body, and are not part of probe 12, handle 16, or any part of the medical carrier:



As such, the method of Edwards describes ***separate data conductors*** 126 (input) and 128 (output) for each processor (microprocessor chip 106). Therefore Edwards does not disclose a ***common data conductor*** for multiple effectors or actuators which comprise a transducer and an identifiable processor as in independent claims 48, 66, and 67, and the claims which depend from them.

Accordingly, Edwards is deficient in that it fails to teach every element of the rejected claims, namely, Edwards does not teach a common conductor for multiple effectors or actuators which comprise a transducer and an identifiable processor. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request that the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of Claims 48, 49, 52, 57-63, and 66-68 be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 50, 51, 63, 64, and 65 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Edwards et al. (U.S. 6,163,716).

Claims 50, 51, 63, 64 and 65 ultimately depend from Claim 48. An element of Claim 48 is at least two separately identifiable effectors wherein each effector comprises a transducer and an identifiable processor, that are electrically coupled to at least one conductor.

Edwards (U.S. 6,163,716) is deficient in that it fails to teach or suggest this element. Edwards fails to teach or suggest this element because the method of Edwards discloses separate data conductors 126 (input) and 128 (output) for each processor (microprocessor chip 106), and therefore Edwards does not disclose or suggest at least two separately identifiable effectors (wherein each effector comprises a transducer and an identifiable processor) that are electrically coupled to at least one electrical data conductor as in dependent claims Claims 50, 51, 63, 64 and 65.

Consequently, the Applicants respectfully request that the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of Claims 50, 51, 63, 64 and 65 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

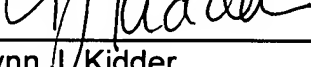
In view of the amendments and remarks above, this application is considered to be in good and proper form for allowance and the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issuance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any underpayment of fees associated with this communication, including any necessary fees for extensions of time, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0815, order number PRTS-012.


Respectfully submitted,

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